

Influenza Vaccine Bulletin #3

September 11, 2003

Influenza Season 2003-04

The National Immunization Program (NIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) publishes and distributes periodic bulletins to update partners about recent developments related to the production, distribution, and administration of influenza vaccine. All recipients of this bulletin are encouraged to distribute each issue widely to colleagues, members, and constituents.

Influenza Vaccine Distribution and Administration

Timing of Influenza Vaccination During the 2003-04 Season

- At its June meeting, the ACIP asked CDC, in collaboration with the FDA and the influenza vaccine manufacturers, to determine if vaccine supplies for the coming year would be adequate and timely. The CDC affirmed on August 11, 2003, that vaccine production for the 2003-04 influenza season is proceeding satisfactorily, and that projected production and distribution schedules will allow for sufficient supply of influenza vaccine during October and November. Therefore, influenza vaccination can proceed for all high-risk and healthy persons, individually and through mass campaigns, as soon as vaccine is available.

Review the Notice to Readers published in the August 22, 2003 *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* for complete information and references at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5233a6.htm>.

CMS Allows Exception to Electronic Reporting Requirement for Providers Submitting Roster Bills

- On August 15, 2003, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published the Final Rule for Electronic Submission of Medicare Claims. The Administrative Simplification Compliance Act (ASCA) requires nearly all claims sent to the Medicare Program be submitted electronically beginning October 16, 2003. However, providers wishing to submit paper roster bills for vaccinations are exempt from this requirement. Review the rule and the few exceptions to these requirements at <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/14mar20010800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2003/pdf/03-20955.pdf>.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) offers free training and testing to assure that providers and their business partners are able to send and receive HIPAA-compliant transactions. Contact your Medicare carrier to schedule testing.

Additional HIPAA information can be found at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2/>.

How to Bill Medicare for Influenza and Pneumococcal Vaccines

- Print step-by-step instructions on billing Medicare for influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations by visiting <http://cms.hhs.gov/preventiveservices/2f.pdf>.

Redistribution of Influenza Vaccine

- According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), providers may reallocate inactivated influenza vaccine to other local providers where vaccine distribution is uneven.

The parameters for redistribution in keeping within the accepted principles of vaccine storage and handling are available on CDC's web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/Flu/News.htm#redist>.

Projections of Influenza Vaccine Distribution

Projections of Monthly Influenza Vaccine Distribution, United States, 2003*

Month	Totals	Cumulative Totals	
		Doses (Millions)	Percent
July	0.15	0.15	0.2%
August	14.80	14.95	17.5%
September	30.25	45.20	52.9%
October	33.25	78.45	91.8%
November	7.03	85.48	100.0%
Totals	85.48	85.48	100.0%

* Information provided by influenza vaccine manufacturers

Influenza Vaccine Communications and Resources

- During August 20-27, 2002, the National Immunization Program at the CDC collected qualitative data to assess beliefs, behaviors, and barriers that cause low influenza and pneumococcal immunization rates among older African-American and Hispanic populations. Review a brief summary of the formative research or download the final report at http://www.cdc.gov/nip/Flu/flu_qualresearch.htm.
- In the June 15, 2003 issue of *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, David S. Fedson addresses preparedness for pandemic influenza as it relates independently to the global vaccine supply and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).
 - (1) **“Pandemic Influenza and the Global Vaccine Supply”**
Review the entire article by visiting <http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/CID/journal/issues/v36n12/20633/20633.web.pdf>

(2) **“Vaccination for Pandemic Influenza and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome: Common Issues and Concerns”**

Review this editorial commentary by visiting <http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/CID/journal/issues/v36n12/31485/31485.web.pdf>

- Check for recent updates to The National Influenza Summit web site by visiting <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/article/1826-7688.html>.
- CDC does not recommend promoting influenza vaccination as a safeguard against confusing symptoms from influenza versus an influenza-like illness caused by SARS . The Q&A is posted on CDC’s web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/vacfacts.htm#16>.
- Refer to or view previous bulletins at <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/Flu/News.htm#Bulletin>.
- Campaign materials for the 2003-04 Influenza season are available. **Visit the Flu Gallery on the CDC/NIP web site to download and print influenza-related health education materials at <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/Flu/gallery>.**

Miscellaneous Information

Pneumococcal Vaccine Payment Increase Effective October 1, 2003

- Effective October 1, 2003, the Medicare Part B payment for the pneumococcal vaccine will be increased to either the charge billed to Medicare or the amount of \$18.62, whichever is lower. Annual Part B deductible and coinsurance amounts do not apply. All physicians, non-physician practitioners, and suppliers who administer pneumococcal vaccination must take assignment on the claim for the vaccine.

For additional information about Medicare and immunizations, refer to the **Immunizations Quick Reference Guide** at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/refimmu.asp>.
